Direct sale of domestic gas

2279. SHRI RAVULA CHANDRA SEKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have allowed to sell domestic cooking gas directly to consumers;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether consumers in rural areas will be given preferences in providing this gas; and

(d) if so, the details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN): (a) to (d) Generally, Public Sector Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) sell domestic LPG cylinders to the consumers through their authorised LPG distributors throughout the country. However, OMCs have also started direct marketing of domestic LPG to widen their customer base and particularly to benefit the consumers in rural areas.

Import of LNG from Qatar

2280. SHRI MURLI DEORA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether India's petronet has signed a 25 year deal to import LNG from Qatar-based Rasgas and if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether the price formula has been settled and if not, how it would be determined over such a long period;

(c) whether it is a fact that the prices have been pegged to the price of crude oil and if so, the justification thereof;

(d) the reasons for not settling the price through gas to gas trade; and

(e) whether the contract would be scrapped if the Qatar prices are higher than the domestic price?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN): (a) Yes, Sir, Petronet LNG Limited (PLL) has signed a Sale Purchase Agreement (SPA) with M/s Rasgas of Qatar for supply of 7.5 Million Metric Tonnes Per Annum (MMTPA) (5 MMTPA for Dahej LNG Project in Gujarat and 2.5 MMTPA for Kochi LNG Project in Kerala) of Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) for 25 years through a global competitive bidding process, Dahej project is mechanically complete and the first load of LNG will be arriving in January 2004. The pre-project activities for Kochi project have been completed. Further progress would depend upon market tie up.

(b) The price formula of LNG is a part of SPA and has been settled between Rasgas and PLL.

(c) and (d) Worldwide, generally the prices of LNG are indexed to crude oil. Gas Sales Agreement (GSA) for PLL's LNG from Rasgas has been settled based on international competitive bidding.

(e) No, Sir. LNG involves a large investment at upstream for liquefaction, cryogenic shipping and regassification of liquid LNG and hence the price of LNG is normally higher. Many of the private parties producing natural gas in the country are selling their gas at a price which may be close to the price of LNG.

Illegal encroachment of area of Gandhi Ashram

†2281. SHRI RAMA SHANKER KAUSHIK: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) what is the area in acres of the Gandhi Ashram situated in the Kingsway Camp and its present status of operation and the activities being run by it;

(b) whether it is a fact that the said Ashram is being rented out illegally and a number of other illegal possession and activities have also been going over there; and

(c) whether Government would like to take steps in order to take the said Ashram in its direct possession and thereby bringing it in its original shape so that its objectives may be fulfilled?

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.